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Senate

(Legislative day of Wednesday, January 5, 2011)

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose kingdom is above all earthly kingdoms and who judges all lesser sovereignties, give our lawmakers this day clean hands and pure hearts to serve You and Your people. Equip them with grace, strength, and wisdom to make our Nation and world better for the glory of Your Name. Lord, infuse them with a creativity that will empower them to do their work according to Your will. Give them peace of soul when their thoughts and plans are right, and disturb them when they drift from what is best. Lead them in paths of righteousness and truth. We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 25, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 p.m. for our weekly caucus luncheons. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Senate rules and committee assignments as I have for the last week or so.

At 9 o'clock tonight, the President will give his State of the Union Address to Congress from the House Chamber. Senators are asked to gather in the Senate Chamber at 8:30 so we can proceed as a body to the House of Representatives. We will leave about 8:40 or 8:45 this evening.

RETURNING TRUTH TO DEBATE

Mr. REID. Madam President, in the 2 weeks we were away from Washington, all of us absorbed the numbing tragedy and horrific attack in Tucson, AZ. The Nation mourned the loss, thanked the heroes, and waited anxiously by a brave Congresswoman's hospital bedside. We continue to wish victims a full and speedy recovery and continue to keep their families in our thoughts.

In the days since the Senate last convened, the Nation also resumed a debate over the words, the tone, and the metaphors we use in the Senate, as well as along the campaign trail, on the Internet, and over the airwaves. The national conversation about our national conversation is not new. It happens every year. Candidates promise it in every election. But since the shooting in Tucson, calls for more careful language have been multiplied and amplified.

There is no evidence that partisan politics played any role in this monstrous attack. Even so, we should be more civil anyway. Being more mindful of the weight of our words always helps. We have much more to gain with civility and discretion.

In this new year, I hope we will return to the respect that has always been a hallmark of the Senate. I hope my colleagues will join in renewing our commitment to productive debate. Some may be inspired by the town hall meetings of two Augusts ago, others by the heated election debates. Some may be motivated by the conversations started after Tucson, AZ, and many will seek more civility simply because it is the right thing to do. Whatever the reason, I hope the return to more responsible rhetoric is more than empty rhetoric. I intend to do my part.

What I am talking about goes beyond inflammatory allegations or hate speech. It also means not questioning each other's motives or calling into

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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